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Discussion Paper

RWANDA

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Background

The UN reports that in excess of 100,000 Rwandans have been killed. Fighting between the government and rebel forces continues. Militia led massacres are also continuing, urged on by radio stations calling for more killing.

UNAMIR has drawdown to 270 troops and is attempting to arrange for the safety of Rwandans under its protection at the Kigali Amahoro stadium.

About 500,000 in-country refugees have fled to the border areas with Tanzania, Uganda, and Zaire. They are being prevented from crossing the borders and are in need of humanitarian assistance.

The White House issued a statement last Friday, mentioning specific military leaders who human rights groups believe have been implicated in the slaughters (tab 1).

Objectives

The IWG has identified six short-term policy objectives:

1. to stop the on-going massacres as quickly as possible through contacts with GOR and RPF leaders and demarches for similar representations with neighboring states, France, Belgium, and others.
2. to support the UN and others in attempts to achieve a cease fire.
3. to encourage Tanzanian and other attempts to resume negotiations under the Arusha Framework.
4. to seek to prevent the violence from spreading outside Rwanda through contacts with neighboring states.
5. to push in the UN to launch an immediate expanded humanitarian assistance effort.
6. to prevent a similar round of slaughter and disorder in Burundi by closely monitoring the situation there and staying in touch with the various elements in the country to dissuade.

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Issues for Discussion

The Deputies should provide direction to the IWG on the degree of activism that they wish to encourage on further international steps aimed at addressing the slaughter and assisting refugees.

A new UNSC resolution is being co-drafted by the Czechs and Argentines. Among the possible elements in the resolution could be a genocide investigation, a call for UNHCR and border countries to engage in cross border assistance to the trapped in country refugees, limited protection for the refugees, and an arms embargo. In the new UNSCR debate, should the US support:

1. Genocide investigation: language that calls for an international investigation of human rights abuses and possible violations of the genocide convention?

2. In Country Protection of Refugees: language that authorizes the use of UNAMIR military or civilian police to protect in-country refugee camps receiving UNHCR or ICRC relief?

3. Arms embargo: language banning arms exports to Rwanda and would, inter alia, sanction the on going Ugandan aid to the rebels?

In addition to the UNSCR, are there additional actions that should be explored aimed at stopping the killing, or punishing those who may have planned it, or at least be seen to be pressuring the Rwandan government to have it punish them.

4. Counter-propaganda: should the US engage in additional propaganda activities to get a message into Rwanda to counter the radio stations that are urging killing?

5. Pressure to Punish Organizers of Killing: should the US work with other nations to explore directed sanctions (no admission on travel status, assets seizures, etc.) aimed at those who may have engineered the slaughter? and/or diplomatic sanctions (down grading relations, termination of non-emergency assistance) against Rwanda until those responsible are tried?

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